

^A
K. *Engles Roman*

LETTER

TO THE

8135.6.16
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Greatest Hypocrite

IN

HIS MAJESTY'S DOMINIONS.

Recordare nefastum illum diem, pone ante Oculos luctus iraque Senatus populi-
que Romani, tum intelliges quantum inter Laudem et Lucrum interfit.

CICERO

LONDON:

LETTER

TO THE

DOMINION

47
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1922

LONDON

A LETTER, &c.

To Lord Loughborough

IT would have shewn more of the intemperate spirit of party rancour, and private animosity, than the pure and justifiable expostulation of outraged feelings, and manly resentment, had I addressed you in an earlier stage of your political apostacy. I was not willing to increase the agitations of alarm and fear, which had so happily roused you from the unprofitable dreams of opposition, and a narrow income, to exaltation, and boundless emolument—happy alarms, and well-timed fears! which, by a singular, but dexterous process, encircled the throbbing brows of selfishness, timidity, and falsehood, with those laurels and rewards, due to integrity, and heroic courage alone,

“Sacro tremuere membra pavore.”

It would have been cruel to plant thorns on the seat of that triumphal car, in which you have so *primly* and so *pertly* placed yourself, at the expence of honour, decorum, and good faith. I did not wish to disturb the harmony of ministerial smiles, or the rapturous volubility of a royal welcome.

Full scope has been given to the interested delusions of creative fancy, the cravings of insatiate ambition, and (if we may believe the melancholy pages of the herald of our ruined commerce) your reward has been speedy and sumptuous. For these, and a thousand gratifications, which courts and court parasites have invented, for plaistering the harlot cheek of venality, and benumbing virtuous energy, sufficient time has elapsed; but the silent, solitary hour approaches, when the voice of conscience *will* be heard, when imagination shall present to your view, that friend, whom you flattered and betrayed; that friend, whose principles you so warmly professed, with the sordid reserve, of a shameful and mercenary desertion.

Descended

Descended from a respectable family, with well cultivated talents, and *some* estimable qualities, you might have passed through life with public applause, and private satisfaction ; but a total abstinence of sincerity from your professions, and of steadiness from your attachments, has diffused a dark and threatening cloud over your declining days. There was, I confess, a short period of your life, during which, resentment, or the want of opportunity, gave a momentary firmness to your conduct, you saw, and apparently felt, the criminal folly and insignificance of being a weathercock, turned by every gust of passion, interest, or caprice : you was, *for a time*, the hero of consistency, a bulwark of patriotism, and the terror of an ill-designing minister. On one occasion, you spoke as you felt, and pronounced the funeral oration of a feeble, despicable measure, in terms of energy, and almost of eloquence.* But *when the heathen furiously raged together, and the people imagined a vain thing, when the kings of the earth stood up*, you could no longer resist temptation, your former tendencies returned with unabating force, you joined in the holy sympathy, and threw yourself headlong into the preponderating ministerial scale, which you described as trembling on the balance.

But if we may believe those tumults which at times evidently disturb your bosom, and that gnawing anguish, which interrupts your effeminate simpers, the hour of retribution is arrived. You are restless and perturbed in your seat. That fatal measure, dictated, extra-officially dictated, by rash presumption, and frustrated by official blunders ; that disastrous measure, which perplexed the counsels of the allies, and defeated the purpose of a whole campaign, covers your head with disgrace : those hollow associates, who seduced you from the path of rectitude, view your approaching degradation with affected concern, and inward transport. The state underlings, and ministerial tools, already begin to despise you ; Eden ventures to hint, that the rewards of so late a convert were disproportionately greater than his own ; he boasts his proud pre-eminence in perfidy and ingratitude ; the immaculate George Rose, protests *his* Westminster business is innocence, compared to *your* conduct ; Heriot hides his head, and

* " — The present bill is a phoenix, sprung from the ashes of the former system, but how mangled, plumage torn from its crest, feathers plucked from its tail, wing-broken, maimed, and crippled."

and the British constitution, in flannel; even Burges, the prattling Burges, observes an expressive silence, whenever your name is mentioned.

Shall I suffuse the livid paleness of your cheek, by recalling your attention to that auspicious moment of your life, when, with stubborn, undeniable fact, staring you in the face, you successfully defended an Asiatic marauder, and received a rent-roll for your fee. Happy in court sun-shine, female patronage, and the irresistible influence of the **NORTHERN LIGHT**, your ways were ways of pleasantness. How mortifying, that such commencements should not have conducted you to the paths of peace; that the Confident of the mighty Thane, the oracle of recorded wisdom, should experience defeat and disgrace in a little contest with a little country town; that a bench of justices should provoke and defy you over their ale; that a great — — should be the sport and bye-word of constables, tything men, and headboroughs; that a petty session should meet you on your own ground, denounce your illegal mandates; and, finally, that you should be despised by those who before had only detested you. I will not exhaust *your* patience, or my own, by entering minutely into *all* the meandering mysteries of your conduct, it would be describing the varying coat of the camelion, or attempting to give a precise denomination to the shape and colour of a solar ray, undulating on the disturbed ocean; you have exhausted the keenness of satire, and the virulence of invective: the expressive term, *Iscariot*, has been added to your name, and *Iscariot*, I need not tell you,* sold his friend, his companion, and his redeemer, for **THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER**.

It was at a remote period of your life, that sudden and miraculous convictions, as of late, burst forth on your mind; and preferment, as of late, trod on the heel of degeneracy and tergiversation. Such conduct exposed you to something more than the smile of a court of justice, you excited the pity of Lord Mansfield, and were confounded by the keen sarcasm of Mr. Dunning. From your first entrance into life, that great constitutional lawyer understood and explained your character, for this you never forgave him; but I will not dissipate the thinness of meagre tenuity, into nothing, by a comparison of *your* merits with those of **LORD ASHBURTON**.

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* Nor, I presume, Mr. Dundas.

it was the business of *his* life to diminish that influence, which, inflamed, no doubt, by amiable motives, *you* are perpetually striving to render paramount; an influence which has hurried us into a German war, that bottomless pit for the blood and treasure of England.

If a continental war, conducted by the skill, and crowned with the victories of a Marlborough; if a contest apparently commenced with just pretensions, ended at last in a debt enormously aggravated, and a treaty everlastingly disgraceful, what disastrous consequences may not England, the subsidizer of Germany, and the pay-master of Europe, expect from the present rash crusade, with Edmund the Hermit bellowing forth his rhapsodies, and rousing tardy zeal, and a Pope at his heels pronouncing benedictions: a crusade, which unwarrantably stalks forth to exterminate opinions as well as men, and crush private judgement, which after cruelly provoking enormity, inconsistently and impotently attempts to punish it.

Beware, rash man, of that tremendous precipice, to the brink of which, you and your associates, have brought the credit and existence of your country; remember, there *was* a war, whose success was predicted with equal emphasis, and with the tide of popular infatuation, fomented by ministerial arts, running equally strong. After millions upon millions have been expended, in fighting the battles of Austria, which Prussia already sees with the struggling reluctance of a mendicant; after you have manured the bogs of Flanders with British blood, are we to be told, that *you* have doubled your income, and made your peace at court; that a stupid barrister succeeds to a post, from which a man of genius was dismissed; that half a dozen hungry turn-coats have been provided for, on the Toulon establishment, and at a moment, when that devoted city, abandoned by the allies, was a scene of massacre and conflagration; and, lastly, that to the INTREPID PARTY PROTEUS, were given (we recollect with what indecent haste) the first fruits of an employment, he was never to fill.

Perhaps it will afford consolation to a mind such as yours, that your name, like his who destroyed the Ephesian Dome, will be handed down to after-times; it will probably gratify the pride and naughtiness of your heart, to reflect, that you, the same aspiring statesman, treated, at one moment, with
insult

insult and vulgarity, a man, in every sense, your superior ; that you shut the council door, and closed the ears of your Sovereign, against the petitions and remonstrances of his subjects, and that you were prominently instrumental, in losing thirteen colonies for ever. The same spirit probably dictated the language, with which the proffered negotiations of France were received, which, by rousing the resentments, and promoting the union, tended, in a considerable degree, to establish the power of the exasperated Republicans.

Let us adore the miraculous and inscrutable ways of Providence, which thus condescends to render the corrupt passions of the human heart, and the vilest tools, subservient to, and instrumental, in promoting the great purposes of Omnipotence. The filthiest and most odious of reptiles, the toad, the leach, and the viper, have sometimes afforded materials for restoring health and ease to the afflicted. A preposterous traffic in indulgences, first taught nations to doubt the degrading impostures of popery ; the infuriate lust of the eighth Harry, gave rapidity to the battle axe of reformation, and added momentum to its stroke ; the blind madness of the Stewarts, for three generations, a despicable and devoted race, compleated the cheering triumph.

But before you proceed in the ruinous career, of havoc without conquest, and desolation without impression, the people of England, with aching hearts and empty purses, are naturally anxious to know the professed object in view ; is it to restore the exiled Bourbon family, the constitution of 1789, promised to the Toulonese, and confirmed by *blazing* evidence, or is it to exterminate the French, a nation, in the opinion of a noble lord, almost wholly Jacobine ?

With a West India fleet saved by luck, without prudence ; with our ships from the Baltic carried into, and supplying the ports of our enemies with naval stores ; with property to the amount of millions, protected by a cutter, a sloop, or at most, a solitary disabled fifty gun ship ; with French frigates scouring the Channel, and insulting our coasts, are we to be amused by pompous tales of our sovereignty at sea, and the boasted activity of an ARMY COLONEL, at the head of the Admiralty. His cheek must surely reflect the hue of his military garb, when he considers the torpid exertions of a fleet, which *once* chastised a world combined against

against us ; a fleet, puzzled and perplexed by the vigour of *prating sophists* *, who, affecting not the empire of the sea, would have resigned their East and West India possessions, before the war commenced, without firing a gun.

Let him retire, in the name of sound policy and good sense, let this trifling pageant retire. I confess, that in the piping time of peace, as a man of straw, he was able, and, I doubt not, extremely willing, to perform, with the assistance of Mr. Pybus, the fatiguing duties of almost a sinecure, to execute a warrant, sign a dispatch, or give a receipt for half a year's salary. But in a war, which even *you* confess, demands our most strenuous exertions ; the nation expects, in a first commissioner of the admiralty, far other attainments than the frivolous accomplishments of a *petit-maitre*, acquirements more solid and applicable, than the effeminate qualifications of descanting on the fringe of a curtain, the splendor of an epaulette, or the dimensions of a drawing-room ; noontide slumbers, and midnight betts.

With what decency can the present be called a successful war ; Toulon gained by treachery, and evacuated with disgrace ; defeat at Dunkirk, notwithstanding the purchased tardiness of Houchard, and the official activity of the noble Duke, who protects and affrights, by his thunders, the peaceful cottage of the Sussex boors.

I will not dwell on the thousands of miserable Royalists, betrayed by our offers, and left on the shores of the Mediterranean, and in Brittany, to the vengeance, the bloody vengeance of their irritated countrymen. Policy forbids us to describe the desperate progress of the Republican troops beyond the Rhine. Wurms'er's army, the flower of his master's legions, irrecoverably annihilated ; immense depots of provisions and stores, and magazines of forage, the destined support of the allied armies for the winter, and the sinews of the approaching campaign, abandoned to the Conventional troops, and transferred to their fortresses, which almost insulated by the territories of their enemies, proudly erect their heads, as everlasting monuments of French enthusiasm, the matchless talents of Vauban, and the impotence of their assailants.

War, with all its horrors, confined to the countries of the invading Germans ; and troops, described as triumphant, retreating

* The National Convention, so called by Mr. Burke, and his Ministerial Friends.

treating before a *prostrate* foe. America, irritated by delays in territorial partition, and repeatedly mortified by tedious naval demurrages, under the plea of a neutrality, which, a few years since, the English court was so pathetically eloquent, in crying out against, and condemning. The Northern courts bullied, like the *little* Great Duke, into hostile measures, which they will wisely embrace every opportunity of evading, and hasten (warned by *our* foolish policy) to purchase the friendship, and secure the commercial and highly beneficial intercourse of the new Republic.*

With clouds so thick, gathering round our political Horizon, we are justified, as it seems every thing we hold dear is at stake, we are surely justified in examining the conduct and abilities of the servants of the crown, "who ride on the " whirlwind, and direct the storm."

After wandering, weary and disgusted, in the unproductive regions of the cabinet, fatigued with pompous pretension, bold assertion, petty finesse, and indecent duplicity, our eyes at last fix, with *some* faint emotions of pleasure, on one character equal to the post he fills, a pleasure, which the hateful impression of early attachments, and his union in later times, with men whom he has alternately opposed, duped, and despised, cannot entirely remove.

His qualifications are indeed respectable; they received every help that parental solicitude, and his own assiduous application could give, were alternately exercised in commercial investigation, and the periodic labours of a Literary Review, till the fortunate stanza at a county election, and a well-timed party pamphlet, introduced him to the Earl of Bute, who knew how to reward, as well as employ, such useful unassuming merit, which can pen a speech another man is to speak, diffuse a ray of plausibility over the dull deliberations of a council board, and conduct, with cautious dexterity, the intrigues of a country corporation.

I will not deny the *appearance* of ability to another ———. It is not the first time that pompous pretension has assumed the air of real merit. On those occasions, where unwelcome truths are to be concealed and kept back, where

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* Is it possible to reflect, without emotion, on the situation of the gallant Genoese. Their existence depending on neutrality, and their capital, probably 'ere now, doomed to ashes, yet they proudly rear their heads, and speak the language of integrity and firmness. Such (and I blush for my country) such was *once* the language and con-

where the object is to puzzle, mislead, or perplex, to diffuse a cloud of his own opiate qualities around him, he shines characteristically conspicuous, and has hit on the happy art, of rendering the perception of his hearers inert, torpid, and blind, to the tendency of a mischievous measure. If to answer preceding speakers, by wandering from the subject, and by gross mistatement; if coughing down be argument; if a horse-laugh, and bawling vociferously for the question, can pass for accurate reasoning, his merit is not inconsiderable. Yet in a responsible post, demanding no small degree of intellectual energy, political sagacity, and a *little* knowledge of foreign courts and interests, something more than meagre mediocrity of talent, is surely expected; exertions more respectable, than the low ribaldry of an Old Bailey Counsel, or the stale stupidity of a Treasury Runner.

The ideal visions of Mr. Dundas's Oriental dream* must not be forgot; his unwieldy contraband cargo of mutilated papers, arranged without order, and compiled without accuracy, where insolvency lurks behind the mask of false calculation, and the cruellest of all monopolies, is boldly justified by state necessity. But it would be dastardly to crush a prostrate foe, who being informed that his documents were fallacious, and his details, consequently, erroneous, candidly confessed, that he was neither prepared to answer the questions of others, nor reconcile his own contradictions.

"The affairs of the Company were never in a more flourishing condition," exclaims the indefatigable FUTYGUR AGENT. "Their existence, as merchants and as sovereigns, *hangs on the slender thread of popular opinion*", is the language of his great PRINCIPAL. Thus interested falsehood, and presumptive declamation, boldly march before, while contradiction, and Asiatic despotism, close, with sullen haughtiness, the rear.

It would be injustice to hospitality and good cheer, to deny that the SECRETARY AT WAR keeps good port, and gives good dinners to the Honiton Voters. If not too minutely examined, Sir George is specious and passable; but if an old friend

* Two assertions of this consummate statesman, may be numbered with the political enigmas of the day:

First, Our late commercial distresses were a strong proof of British prosperity.

Second, The perpetual applications of the India Company for loans, are plain evidence of pecuniary abundance.

friend may be permitted to advise him, he will do well, not to dictate arrangements from the war-office, or speak on army estimates, after the third bottle. If he improves from this hint, he may communicate it to the stately AUTOMATON* in Downing-street, if he should ever see him guilty of the indecorum of presenting himself intoxicated before the House of Commons.

Perhaps it may be expected, that I should examine and display the merits of our great Financier and War Minister, who, I understand, is ambitious of two-fold fame,

“ Tam marti, quam mercurio.”

But I decline the invidious task ; time and experience have anticipated and confirmed all I could say on the copious subject. His intrigues with the placid BUCKINGHAM, his Irish propositions, his commutation act, his tobacco bill, his armaments, his treaties, his peace without security, his armed truces, his very constitutional opinion on the subject of introducing foreign troops, and lastly, our present situation, will determine his merits with posterity†.

It was matter of no small triumph to the sagacious bloodhound of administration, when the MADRID APOSTATE was taken in the toils ; but the ministerial plantations must have been wretchedly stocked, when common-place official knowledge, and the assumed importance of diplomatic affectation, where so highly prized : according to the *argumentum ad palmam*, his qualifications must indeed be eminent.

I will make every possible allowance for the hereditary parsimony of a noble Duke ; but if he wished his son to contemplate our gracious Sovereign's relation, the STADTHOLDER, as a model of consummate ability, and to study Grotius and Puffendorf at the Hague, was it decent, with an endless rent-roll like his, that the public should provide a travelling tutor for the unfledged politics of a stripling ; would nothing less than a peer, a plenipotentiary, and a privy counsellor, suffice to read the comment ?

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* An automaton is described as a curious piece of mechanism, put together, and wound up by the hand of an artist, which appears to possess a voluntary motion within itself, though the moment its internal master-spring ceases to impel it, it is discovered to be a mere assemblage of wire and wheels.

† I have not swelled the catalogue by his affected zeal, but his inveterate hostility to the Liberty of the Press ; these, I apprehend, will rescue the ill-founded plausibi-

I applaud the economy, and would, if an opportunity offered, do justice to the exertions of his Grace of Richmond: I cannot but praise the proviso introduced into his contracts for the vessels which convey stone to the West India islands; *that it shall not be paid for, if crumbled and reduced to powder, on its arrival in port.* But after all his Goodwood rhetoric, and the bustle of his pacific campaigns, I am still firmly of opinion, that the wooden walls of Old England are her best bulwarks.

Certain late mismanagements at the victualling office, which disgusted and drove an able and valuable commissioner* from the board, will probably be remedied, when the industry of certain persons, in collecting pictures, and purchasing a borough, is somewhat relaxed: should they again become objects of public discussion, we may hope that more honourable and more satisfactory answers will be given, than the legal jargon of Bow-street, or the quibbling evasion of a sharper at a quarter sessions†.

With such men, and such measures, shall we be further plunged, by the frantic zealots of Rome and Loyola, the desperate Pilnitz conference, and the pamphlet of a degraded Frenchman, into battle, bankruptcy, and confusion, first excited by puerile petulance, by misplaced buckram, and Quixotic bravado; into a war, which France, from interest, inclination, and a thousand reasons, was anxiously, pertinaciously, and indeed humbly, solicitous to avoid; a war, which the arming twenty-five ships of the line, and laying it down as the first point of negotiation, that the Gallic forces should instantly quit Flanders and Holland, would have entirely rendered unnecessary; as their irruption into those territories was clearly accelerated, and produced by anticipating our meditated hostility, and our pecuniary aids in the former campaign; the policy of anticipating an enemy having been practised in most wars, and particularly in one striking instance by ourselves.

By these means, and with the path of common prudence open before us, we could not have erred. Great Britain, which stands in such urgent need of a long peace, might, in time, have closed those still bleeding wounds inflicted during the American

* Sir Charles Middleton.

† An obstinate silence was expressly enjoined, and observed, *least*, as was unblushingly avowed, I believe by Mr. Rose, *least the parties might criminate themselves; credit posterity!*

American infatuation. Our commerce, augmented by the benefits of a wise neutrality, our revenue improved, and our constitution, notwithstanding the school-boy flourish of Mr. Wyndham*, had been saved from many of those injurious attacks, which have only served to provoke discussion, and irritate ill design, which have rudely torn aside the wholesome veil of habitual awe, and discovered, to profane eyes, the nudities and imperfections of a revered, a venerable, but decayed parent.

War will naturally be the selfish cry, the abominable howl of stockbrokers, agents, contractors, raisers of regiments, and a long train of arlarmists, whose arguments, equipages, scrip, and omnium, evidently point out

“ Multis utile bellum,”

as a proper and significant motto for their carriages, which had been consigned by peace to their musty retreats : but I cannot, for the credit of my country, I *will* not believe, any rational, *disinterested* man, any true friend to Great Britain, can hold it right, that at the arbitrary call of the Northern potentates, at the rattle of the Germanic patrole, England is, on every occasion, to be considered and employed as the Bow-street runner, the thief-taker, the Macmanus or hangman of Europe, to punish massacre, sacrilege, and enormity, or to dictate forms of government to her neighbours, at the expence of her existence, as a commercial, free, and independent kingdom.

If the system, if the fatal system, pursued by Mr. Pitt, is to be generally adopted, we lose at once all the blessings of our insular situation, we expose ourselves to the exhausting alliances, the diplomatic chicane, and juggling absurdities, of continental politics, without a possibility, should the war be ever so successful, without the shadow of a possibility, of our attaining a single advantage, in national honour, revenue, or dominion.

Conquest, and in what war can it be expected without an alloy of defeat, conquest, under our present circumstances, would, at the best, only place us in the situation of a merchant, who quarrelling with his country dealers for dismissing their servants, or saying their prayers at home, should directly

* Perish Commerce, live the Constitution ! A suitable exclamation in the representative of a town, which owes its existence to trade.

directly proceed to pull down their houses, and to burn their stock.

The evils of war, in our present critical state, exceed, a thousand-fold, every ill we propose to avert, and every advantage we wish to attain. Repulse or defeat will lay the everlasting foundations of a military Republic in the heart of Europe; a Republic, whose friendship we might have insured, whose well-founded, whose exasperated resentments, England, and only England, could have mitigated. Should the most brilliant victories crown our attempts, in addition to being irrecoverably exhausted by the effort (and who will deny *that* position) we shall have destroyed the most convenient and the best market for our own commodities; we shall have butchered and ruined those with whom we have been engaged in the most lucrative branches of our commerce; while desolation, superstition, and despotism, will resume, with giant strides, their iron reign, over the exhausted and bleeding nations of Europe.

AN ENGLISHMAN.

